

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

22 NOV. 1961
~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Berlin

a) The Communists have now placed steel beams in a zig-zag pattern across the autobahn from West Germany between the Soviet and US checkpoints before it enters West Berlin. As so far constructed this barrier only slows down traffic. We do not know its purpose, but it may be a prelude to new harassments.

b) During the new construction on the Berlin Wall over the weekend, East Germans tried a new series of harassments of US patrols in East Berlin--going so far as to rip radio antenna off several vehicles. They may be attempting to get a rise out of the members of the patrol as another means of dramatizing East German control in East Berlin.

[REDACTED]

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2. Vietnam

a) Hanoi has recently published in book form a compilation of writings by North Vietnam's military chief, General Giap, who led Ho Chih Minh's forces against the French. According to the standards set forth by Giap, the transition from guerrilla warfare into mobile warfare is marked by the appearance of battalion-sized units--now the case with the Viet Cong.

b) South Vietnamese casualty figures (killed, wounded and captured) have increased markedly over the past two months and casualties for 1961 may double those of 1960 (6700). The US Embassy fears a serious drop in military morale if the trend continues.

[REDACTED]

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3. West New Guinea

General Nasution, Indonesian Minister of National Security, has asked that the US not support the Dutch UN resolution on West New Guinea lest the US position "and that of its friends in Indonesia" be endangered. He sees no solution emerging from this UN session and wants the US to continue to be able to talk with both sides. He feels he can stave off a military solution as long as there is real hope for a political solution.

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4. Venezuela

Ambassador Stewart believes Betancourt would be "terribly disappointed" if President Kennedy does not visit Venezuela. Betancourt is confident he is now in a position to prevent trouble from the leftists. He believes he has convinced President Lleras of Columbia that a visit there by President Kennedy would be "impractical."

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5. USSR-Iran

There have been new Soviet-Iranian exchanges in Moscow over foreign bases in Iran. The Iranians have renewed their offer of a guarantee against missile bases; the Soviets have repeated their demand for one covering all foreign bases, but do not appear to be pressing hard now.

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6. Dominican Republic

Ciudad Trujillo yesterday was a sea of joyous confusion. Balaguer appears to be gaining control over the military, and his main problems now are to cope with increasing Castro/Communist agitation and organizational activities and to prevent some newly returned opposition leaders from inciting the crowds to irresponsible action.

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7. Laos

a) As of yesterday the Boun Oum government was still boggling at the size of the security guard Souvanna and Souphannouvong wish to bring to Vientiane for the meeting of the three princes still scheduled for November 24-27.
b) The Chinese Communist presence in Phong Saly province in northwest Laos is growing. Technicians have been arriving--principally for work on a road from Yunnan, a consul is now there, and Chinese light transports have recently been making daily flights into the area.

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NOTES

- A. Cairo, through its official news agency, yesterday lambasted President Kennedy in the strongest terms we have seen since last April. His Seattle speech is characterized as "full scale war on neutralism" and in this he "is no different from Khrushchev." His "deeds" include the recent Syrian revolt and "the attempt to isolate India from the neutral and nonaligned front."
- B. We have reason to believe East Germany's Ulbricht flew to Moscow on Monday. We don't know why, but Moscow may wish to make changes in the East German party leadership or new initiatives on the Berlin and German issues may be brewing. [REDACTED]
- C. Preparations for a new Soviet space shot appear to be stepping up. There is one tentative indication it will be manned. No date has been forecast, but it may be fairly soon. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- E. The Soviet civil airline apparently no longer runs through service to Peiping. [REDACTED]
- F. Ambassador Kennan sees more signs that the Yugoslav government is preparing to charge the US with having cut off aid as a form of political pressure and to renounce any intention of accepting further aid.

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- G. President Kekkonen has expressed his thanks for President Kennedy's "thoughtfulness and for the inconspicuous way in which his message was delivered." He described Secretary Rusk's press statement as "most helpful."
- H. The Albanians are putting out more feelers about expanding trade with the West. They seem to be interested in buying US wheat and in selling chrome and nickel to the US. [REDACTED]

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE